

Witness the case of Melrose Coker, an African refugee from Sierra Leone, who has languished in two different refugee camps since 1999. She and her children have been subjected to hazardous labor exploitation, physical abuse, denial of education, sexual violence and exploitation. While trying to survive hardships in one of these camps, Melrose was able to make contact with her family in the United States. Her mother was deeply troubled and saddened by the hardships Melrose and her family suffered in Guinea. She could not sit back and watch while her daughter and grandchildren suffered. She therefore petitioned for Melrose and her family to be provided with visas to travel to the United States, for purposes of family reunification and resettlement. This petition was filed with a local refugee agency in New York City in 1999. Several months passed and no feed-back was received from the agency handling the petition. Several petitions have been filed by Melrose's family in the United States, with various agencies and UNECR, to resettle Melrose's family in the United States. Thus far, all of these efforts have been unsuccessful. Inquiries into the status of her case have all produced no information or response. Meanwhile, Melrose and her family continue to perish while putting their lives at risk everyday, living in fear, poverty and squalor. Melrose's voice is reaching out of the depths of darkness and misery and is crying out to us today. Not only has Melrose's family suffered some of the worst atrocities ever recorded in the world during the war in Sierra Leone, but they continue to remain at risk in the refugee camps in Guinea—where they are supposed to find safety. I, therefore, appeal to you to listen to Melrose's voice calling from beyond the tents of refugee camps in Guinea. I urge you to take on the challenge to protect her and resettle and reunify her with her family in the United States.

Finally, Haitian and African refugees are in dire need of our help and as we close our doors to their pleas or continue to allow them to be mistreated in our own nation, we join alliances with those that are for the inhumane treatment of human beings. Have we not dedicated ourselves to promoting the freedom of those deprived of rights that we believe are inherent to human life? The answer is yes. The United States has been a leader in the protection of refugees and as we decline in our dedication to those that need our aid so do the rest of the resettlement countries. We must remember the events of September 11th and learn how to prevent them, but we cannot do so at the cost of the lives of others. We were attacked on that day because of our principles, if we retract on them, we our only allowing ourselves to lose in the war on terrorism. The Haitian and African refugees need our help; let us stand up for what we believe in and give them the rights that they deserve.

TRIBUTE TO MS. SALLY SCHMITZ

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Ms. Sally Schmitz on the occasion of her retirement after an exceptional career as the Administrative Assistant

and Office Manager of the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OAC).

For the past fifteen years, Ms. Schmitz has served the business community and citizens of the City of Ottawa in an outstanding fashion—oftentimes providing the behind-the-scenes coordination for many of the City of Ottawa's most attractive and successful events.

Some of these key events made successful in large part because of Ms. Schmitz's organizational abilities include the Ottawa Area Chamber's sold-out annual meeting banquet at Starved Rock Lodge; the OAC's Business Expo and BIP Golf Outing; the huge Welcomeburger community event; many Riverfest activities and the expanding Farmers Market.

In addition to coordinating these key events which have enhanced and enriched the quality of life in the City of Ottawa, Ms. Schmitz has played a vital role over the years in helping the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry develop into a vigorous and effective organization. For example, Ms. Schmitz's work to maintain an efficient office operation while supporting OAC membership recruitment and retention efforts have been absolutely critical to the success of the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am proud and pleased to be able to offer to my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives the example of Ms. Sally Schmitz as an outstanding community servant whose work during the course of her career has helped build the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry into perhaps the leading public service organization in the City of Ottawa.

IN RECOGNITION OF JACK LOFTIS

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jack Loftis, the longtime Associate Publisher and Editor of the Houston Chronicle, who will officially retire on July 1, 2002, after serving nearly 50 years in Texas journalism.

A native of Hillsboro, Texas, Jack Loftis began his journalism career as a sportswriter for the Hillsboro Daily Mirror while still attending Baylor University, where he received a BBA degree in the spring of 1957. Soon after he was named editor of the paper in 1962. Mr. Loftis joined the Houston Chronicle in 1965 as a copy editor and five years later became editor of the Texas Magazine, the paper's Sunday rotogravure section. In 1972, he was promoted to features editor and began his rise through the newspaper's executive ranks and in 1974 was named assistant managing editor. Promoted to assistant editor in 1979 and vice president and editor in 1987, Jack Loftis gained the additional titles of executive vice president in 1990 and associate publisher in 1998. At the age of 67, Mr. Loftis has been the Chronicle's ranking editor during the past 15 years and the ninth in the Chronicle's 100-year history. His tenure is second only to that of M. E. Foster, who founded the paper in 1901 and served as its editor for 26 years.

Throughout his career Jack Loftis has remained involved in a number of organizations aimed at improving the Houston community.

He is a founding director of Crime Stoppers of Houston, Inc., Vice President of the Chronicle's Goodfellows holiday charity and a former member of both the Houston READ Commission and the Clean Houston Commission. Mr. Loftis, along with his wife Beverly has been involved in activities connected with the Lone Star Chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Friends of the West University Park and Citizens for Animal Protection.

Jack Loftis' exemplary model of community activism has earned him the respect and praise of his colleagues, community leaders and countless community organizations. He was the recipient of the United Way Loving Hand Award (1994); the Headliners Foundation of Texas' Lifetime Achievement Award (1995); Honorary chairman of the 1995 Inaugural Committee; Newspaper Features Hall of Fame (1997); the Freedom of the Information Foundation of Texas' James Madison Award (1999); and the Pulitzer Prize Nominating Juror (1999 and 2000).

Honored as a Baylor Distinguished Alumnus in 1988, Loftis was a member of the school's Sesquicentennial Council of 150 during 1993–95 and received the Baylor Communications Award in 1997. He currently is a member of the executive committee of the Baylor Alumni Association and chairs the advisory board for The Baylor Line, the association's quarterly magazine. Also, in recognition of his legacy, Baylor University has named the press box at its newly constructed Baylor Ballpark stadium in Jack Loftis' honor.

Jack Loftis recently summed up his career best by saying: "Since the day I walked in the Chronicle my intention has been to do what was best for the community, this newspaper and this staff. I hope I have succeeded more times than I have failed." Mr. Speaker there is no question that Jack Loftis has succeeded in improving our city, state and nation and establishing the Houston Chronicle as one of America's leading daily newspapers. Throughout his tenure, Jack witnessed and reported on the tremendous growth of Houston and Texas, the rise (and sometimes the fall) of its leaders and every day lives of the people who make up our great nation. Committed to the truth and a free, open, and democratic society, he has never shied away from reporting the news and expressing an opinion regardless of controversy or consternation. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend on his tremendous career and commend him on a job well done.

DENTAL AMALGAM SAFETY

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to support the continued recognition of Amalgam as a safe and appropriate material to be used in dental fillings.

Numerous studies conducted by a diverse assortment of health research organizations including the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all confirm that the use of Amalgam in dental fillings is safe. With the costs of healthcare already soaring it is important to protect those treatments that have a